

[(a)] ~~(b)~~ an AV path for carrying AV signals representing video images and spoken audio of the participants among the workstations;

[(b)] ~~(c)~~ an AV conference manager for managing a videoconference during which the video image and spoken audio of one of the participants is reproduced at the workstation of another of the participants; and

[(c)] ~~(d)~~ a participant locator [which] that associates a participant with [an identifier entered when] each workstation at which the participant logs in[to any one of a plurality of workstations, whereby a] and thereby enables the routing of a videoconference call [to initiate a videoconference with first] for that participant [is routed], to the workstation at which [the] that participant is logged in.

3. (Once Amended) The teleconferencing system of claim 2 further comprising:

(a) a services directory [for tracking the] of workstation audio and video capabilities [associated with each workstation, whereby] that enables the processing of a call[, from a second] to [the first] a participant[, and including a request for a service with respect to a first participant, is processed] based on [which] the capabilities associated with [the first] that participant.

4. (Once Amended) The teleconferencing system of claim 3 further comprising:

(a) a plurality of switches[, in communication with the AV and data paths, each switch being] operable to [put at least one workstation in communication with both the AV and data

paths, whereby] establish a teleconference [can be established] between any two [or more] participants out of a total pool of at least 100 participants.

5. (Once Amended) The teleconferencing system of claim 4, wherein at least two of the switches are geographically dispersed and the AV [and data] path[s are] is defined by at least one Wide Area Network.

6. (Once Amended) The teleconferencing system of claim 2, further comprising:

(a) an AV signal switcher for receiving and routing the AV signals to an intended location; [and]

(b) at least one AV reproduction device with associated [capabilities of reproducing] audio and/or video reproduction capabilities [signals at a workstation and for addressing a request for reproduction services generated at a workstation, wherein the AV conference manager includes]; and

(c) a directory of each AV reproduction device and its associated capabilities[, whereby] and wherein the AV conference manager processes a request for a reproduction service, generated at a workstation, [is processed by the AV conference manager to cause] by addressing the directory of reproduction devices, selecting an appropriate AV reproduction device and causing the selected device to provide the requested reproduction service to[p] the workstation.

7. (Once Amended) The teleconferencing system of claim 6, wherein the AV conference manager[, in processing the request, associates a plurality of different capabilities, of at least

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one] selects the AV reproduction device[, to cause the providing of the requested reproduction service,] according to a predetermined order of available reproduction capabilities.

9. (Once Amended) The teleconferencing system of claim 8, further comprising:

(a) a user interface for enabling the first participant to select a capability associated with the external AV reproduction device[, whereby the AV conference manager] to cause[s the providing of] an AV reproduction service to be provided to the workstation associated with the first participant.

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10. (Once Amended) The teleconferencing system of claim 2, further comprising:

(a) signal format conversion means for converting signals of one format to another format, and
[whereby] wherein the teleconferencing system can support [capture and reproduction devices based on] different signal format standards.

11. (Once Amended) A method of conducting a teleconference among a plurality of participants having workstations with associated monitors for displaying visual images, and with associated AV capture and reproduction capabilities for capturing and reproducing video images and spoken audio of the participants, the workstations being interconnected by a first network[, the network] providing a [data path for carrying] digital data signal[s] path among the workstations, the method [system] comprising the steps of:

- (a) carrying AV signals representing video images and spoken audio of the participants along an AV path among the workstations;
- (b) managing a videoconference during which the video image and spoken audio of one of the participants is reproduced at the workstation of another of the participants;
- (c) associating a participant with [an identifier entered when] each workstation logged into by the participant [logs into any one of a plurality of workstations]; and
- (d) routing a call to initiate a videoconference with first participant to the workstation at which the participant is logged in[; and]

C2 12. (Once Amended) The method of claim 11, further comprising the steps of:

- (a) tracking the audio and video capabilities associated with each workstation; and
- (b) processing a call, from a second to the first participant, [and including a request for a service with respect to a first participant,] based on which audio and video capabilities are associated with the first participant.

[12.] 13. (Once Amended) The method of claim [11] 12, further comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing at least one AV reproduction device with associated capabilities of reproducing at least audio or video signals at a workstation;
- (b) defining at least one directory of AV reproduction devices and each devices associated capabilities; [and]
- (c) [processing a request for a reproduction service to cause] addressing the directory of devices to select an appropriate AV reproduction device; and

(d) causing the selected device to provide the requested reproduction service to the workstation.

[13.] 14. (Once Amended) The method of claim [12] 13. further comprising the step of:

(a) interfacing between the AV conference manager and an external AV reproduction device.

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[14.] 15. (Once Amended) The method of claim 11, further comprising the step of:

(a) converting signals of one format to another format to enable the teleconferencing system to support [capture and reproduction devices based on] different signal format standards.

Add the following new claims:

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16. The system of claim 2, further comprising a data path along which digital data signals can be transmitted between a plurality of the workstation.

17. The teleconferencing system of claim 2, wherein the AV path connects the workstation of a first of the participants at a first location to the workstation of a second of the participants at a second location via a third location, the system further comprising:

(a) at least first and second codecs, respectively at the first and second locations, configured to compress AV signals and decompress compressed AV signals; and

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(b) an AV signal switch at the third location, operable to route compressed AV signals, destined for another without the compressed signals being decompressed at the third location.

18. The teleconferencing system of claim 17, further comprising:

(a) a data conferencing manager for managing a data conference, during which shared data is displayed on the workstation monitors of a plurality of the participants and wherein a videoconference, during which the video image and spoken audio of one of the participants are reproduced at the workstation of another of the participants is managed by utilizing a data network operating system and a data network protocol of the first network.

19. The teleconferencing system of claim 17, wherein video images are reproduced at the workstations at at least 20 frames per second.

20. The teleconferencing system of claim 19, wherein video images are reproduced at the workstations at at least 30 frames per second.

21. The method of claim 11, wherein the AV path connects the workstation of a first of the participants at a first location of the workstation of a second of the participants at a second location via a third location, the method further comprising the steps of:

- (a) compressing the AV signals;
- (b) receiving the compressed AV signals at the third location; and

(c) routing the received compressed AV signals to the second location with decompressing them at the third location.

22. The method of claim 21, further comprising the steps of:

(a) managing a data conference to share among a plurality of the participants and display the data on the monitors of the participants' workstations;

(b) managing a videoconference to reproduce the video images and spoken audio of one of the participants at the workstation of another of the participants by utilizing a data network operating system and data network protocol of the first network.

23. The method of claim 22, wherein video images are reproduced at the workstations at at least 20 frames per second.

24. The method of claim 23, wherein video images are reproduced at the workstations at at least 30 frames per second.

REMARKS

Introduction

This amendment is made after a meeting with the Examiner on September 5, 1996. The applicants, assignee and attorney of record thank the Examiner for the time and effort spent in preparing for and having the meeting. This meeting was particularly helpful as it focused on